

Greetings Friends:

We hope you had a very happy Thanksgiving, and with the aid of "Christmas Portrait" we're sure you were able to "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas". There must have been very few homes without Carpenters Christmas music, and here is some good news to launch the New Year! "Christmas Portrait" reached GOLD status early in December, and the recently released album in England "Singles 1974-1978" gained PLATINUM status! (A special vote of thanks to our English fans.) We congratulate our superstars on their fine achievement, and they in turn convey their grateful thanks to you for your loyal support.

Karen & Richard certainly inspired us to adopt the Christmas spirit well ahead of time here in Southern California, when they participated in the Long Beach Cal. State Winter Festival Concert which was a sell-out.

The audience was treated to some awe-inspiring music rendered by five choral groups. Karen sang "Merry Christmas Darling", "Silent Night" and her spine chilling version of "Ave Maria". Richard had hoped to play the "Nutcracker Suite" but the orchestra was not fully prepared, so he contributed his rendition of "Close Encounters/Star Wars" theme. The guest conductor for these segments was our own Doug Strawn.

At the conclusion, the President of the university Stephen Horn made a presentation of special commendation to Karen & Richard (former students) in the form of a handsome plaque bearing their name and the inscription: "In recognition of his/her leadership in creating a unique style of popular music". We warmly endorse that sentiment.

The group was invited to perform as special guests on the Bruce Forsyth television show in London, England early in December. It was unfortunate Richard developed flu just prior to departure date, so the group flew to London without their maestro.

Karen held the fort very admirably, and they thoroughly enjoyed the trip, in spite of working from early morning til late at night. She had several radio & television interviews with BBC1 & BBC2, plus a press interview with David Wigg.

The trip was specially happy for Karen when she learned the new album had reached #4 within 5 days of release, and was #2 (one place behind "Grease") on the U.K. charts while she was there.

The songs Karen sang on Bruce's show were: "Mr. Postman", "I Need To Be In Love" and "Merry Christmas Darling", plus a duet with Bruce: "White Christmas" and "Winter Wonderland". Jeff Wesley was engaged to take over for Richard on the keyboards. The show was aired on Christmas Eve which must have made our English fans very happy.

On her return home, Mom & Dad had arranged for a 'special friend' to greet Karen in the hallway of her condo in the form of an almost life-size Mickey Mouse fashioned bouquet displaying a message reading "Welcome Home Karen". She was thrilled with the welcome.

By now the Carpenter homestead was traditionally adorned in all it's seasonal finery. Reindeer, bambi's, snowmen & Santa were artistically set on the rooftop. Bells & candy canes lined the porch & driveway, and the twinkling lights made the illuminated display a sight to behold for the numerous people on their yuletide sightseeing tour.

A relatively new F.M. radio station in Los Angeles K100, played the entire "Christmas Portrait" album one evening before Christmas, and Karen's comments relating to each track were very interesting. It was good to hear "Merry Christmas Darling" recieve it's fair share of airplay during the festive season.

The family enjoyed an intimate turkey dinner with close friends in an atmosphere of their favorite music. When the time approached for opening gifts, it became apparent Karen was being initiated into becoming an established Mickey Mouse buff! Most of her presents were associated with Mickey memorabilia, such as a rocking Mickey (not horse) from the 1930's, the original sheet music to the first Mickey Mouse theme song, a commemorative watch, and an original watch which is now valued at 190% more than the original price! One of Karen's main delights was a Jack & The Beanstalk story accompanied with the recorded reading set to music by Billy May in 1941.

No doubt many U.S. fans saw Karen & Richard's surprise appearance on America's tribute to Mickey during his 50th birthday celebrations which was televised recently. Among the galaxy of stars presenting their personal greetings, Karen & Richard's included Mickey's name spelled to the tune of "Close To You" which was really cute.

While on the subject of that famous Disney character, Karen & Richard met him when they were guests of Jerry Weintraub, at the birthday party of his young daughter. It was Mickey's first public appearance outside the park. What a unique surprise for that lucky little girl.

Now the fun is over, it's back to the studios (their second home.)

#### A SPECIAL NOTE:

Due to the innovation of the pen pal scheme, which has proved to be much more time consuming than originally estimated, and with the backlog of post-Christmas orders due to staff sickness, there will be a delay of at least 6 weeks on the next newsletter, for which we must apologize, but please bear with us.

We have had overwhelming requests for pen pals in California, and have now exhausted our supply of names from that State, so will people whose request we have been unable to fulfill, please give an alternate State, preferably suggestions for "Any State" would help to expedite the completion of the program.

Karen & Richard wish to express their gratitude for the numerous congratulatory messages pertaining to their Christmas Special & Album, as well as the hundreds of cards etc.

I have been advised by A & M Records in Hollywood, that the new "Singles 1974-1978" album was released in England only, but copies will probably be available in the 'Imports' section of music stores.

The Carpenter family, and everyone connected with their 'outfit' wish you a Happy, Healthy, Safe, Prosperous & Peaceful New Year.

Bye for now,  
Rosina